



Avalanche Research + Education

## AIARE Recreational Avalanche Instructor and Course Leader

### Qualifications and Continuing Education Requirements

Effective November 1, 2017

Updated September, 4 2020

## AIARE Course Leader

An AIARE Course Leader is an experienced educator and avalanche professional with a minimum of seven seasons of winter backcountry experience and leadership along with significant experience teaching the entire AIARE course progression.

Qualified AIARE Instructors become AIARE Course Leaders by successfully completing a Course Leader Training (CLT) and having a course leader application approved. AIARE Course Leaders maintain their course leader status by remaining current on yearly dues and continuing education requirements.

AIARE Course Leaders are qualified to lead the following AIARE programs: Avalanche Awareness, Avalanche Rescue, AIARE 1, and AIARE 2. *A qualified AIARE Course Leader is required to be present for the entirety of the AIARE 1 and 2 Courses, as well as any AIARE course that includes travel in or near avalanche terrain.*

### Course Leader Training Qualification

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The following minimum qualifications must be met in order to apply for an AIARE Course Leader Training. No exceptions or exemptions are made for these qualifications.

- 7 seasons of winter backcountry experience<sup>1</sup> involving leadership and decision making in avalanche terrain
- Experience instructing AIARE 1, AIARE 2, and Avalanche Rescue courses
- A Pro 2 certificate or equivalent<sup>2</sup>
- Letter of recommendation from an AIARE Course Leader outlining competence delivering AIARE curriculum and readiness to take the Course Leader Training

### Course Leader Application

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Course Leader Training participants are assessed during the Course Leader Training. Participants successfully passing the CLT can apply for Course Leader status by becoming a professional member of A3 and submitting a course leader application.

### Maintaining Course Leader Status

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AIARE Course Leaders maintain their course leader status by:

- Participating in yearly AIARE Instructor Professional Development
- Remaining current on their AIARE Instructor and A3 membership dues
- Keeping up to date on curriculum changes and updating teaching materials as they become available

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<sup>1</sup> Experience is defined using A3 guidelines for membership: 20 or more days of backcountry travel constitutes one season. These are documented days where the applicant is making decisions in avalanche terrain. Those who travel to South America or New Zealand during the North American summer can accumulate 2 seasons in one calendar year. Experience can be verified by documentation or by a letter from a professional member of A3 and can involve a combination of professional and recreational backcountry travel.

<sup>2</sup> Course Leader or Instructor applicants who feel they have the equivalent training and certification can apply for a Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) and equivalence. Current AIARE Instructors and Course leaders who have a pre Nov. 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017 AIARE 3 certificate meet the equivalence of a Pro 2.

## AIARE Instructor

An AIARE Instructor is an experienced backcountry traveler with a minimum of five seasons of winter backcountry experience.

Qualified individuals become AIARE Instructors by successfully completing an AIARE Instructor Training Course and submitting an instructor application. AIARE Instructors maintain their instructor status by remaining current on yearly dues and continuing education requirements.

*On every AIARE program, AIARE Avalanche Instructors are mentored under the direct supervision of an AIARE Course Leader. AIARE Instructors can lead Avalanche Awareness courses (including field session) and Avalanche Rescue courses, so long as no activities are conducted in or near avalanche terrain. Any AIARE courses that do travel in or near avalanche terrain require an AIARE Course Leader present. AIARE Instructors leading Avalanche Rescue Courses are required to be professional members of A3.*

### Instructor Training Course Qualification

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The following minimum qualifications must be met in order to apply for an AIARE Instructor Training Course. No exceptions or exemptions are made for these qualifications.

- 5 seasons of winter backcountry experience<sup>3</sup> involving leadership and decision making in avalanche terrain
- Recent (within 4 years) attendance on an AIARE 1, 2 and Avalanche Rescue course
- A Pro 1 certificate or equivalent<sup>45</sup>

### Instructor Application

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Instructor Training participants are assessed during the Instructor Training. Participants successfully completing the Instructor Training Course can apply for Instructor status by becoming a professional or affiliate member of A3 and submitting an instructor application.

### Maintaining Instructor Status

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AIARE Instructors maintain their instructor status by:

- Participating in yearly AIARE Instructor Professional Development

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<sup>3</sup> Experience is defined using A3 guidelines for membership: 20 or more days of backcountry travel constitutes one season. These are documented days where the applicant is making decisions in avalanche terrain. Those who travel to South America or New Zealand during the North American summer can accumulate 2 seasons in one calendar year. Experience can be verified by documentation or by a letter from a professional member of A3 and can involve a combination of professional and recreational backcountry travel.

<sup>4</sup> AIARE Instructors who currently qualify as instructors prior to Nov. 1st, 2017, have 3 years from this date to obtain the PRO 1 certificate.

<sup>5</sup> Course Leader or Instructor applicants who feel they have the equivalent training and certification can apply for a Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) and equivalence. Current AIARE Instructors and Course leaders who have a pre Nov. 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017 AIARE 3 certificate meet the equivalence of a Pro 2.

- Remaining current on their AIARE Instructor and A3 membership dues
- Keeping up to date on curriculum changes and updating teaching materials as they become available

## Apprentice Instructor

AIARE supports the long-held tradition of mentorship of aspiring avalanche instructors or apprentices. AIARE defines Apprentices as aspiring instructors who do not yet meet AIARE Instructor qualifications. One Apprentice can assist in each field group, under the direct supervision and mentorship of an AIARE Course Leader or Instructor. During this apprenticeship, individuals gain familiarity with the AIARE curriculum, as well as building reference experiences that form an essential foundation for engaged participation in the AIARE Instructor Training.

## AIARE Instructor Continuing Education

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AIARE Continuing Education (CE) seeks to provide AIARE Instructors and Course Leaders the opportunity to choose from a menu of options in order to tailor professional development to meet the interests or needs of each individual instructor.

AIARE Instructor and Course Leaders keep on top of updates to AIARE curriculum, industry and teaching best practices, and their own professional development through annual continuing education. The AIARE CE Program provides AIARE Instructors and Course Leaders the opportunity to choose from a menu of course options in order to tailor their individual professional development needs.

Instructors meet this annual requirement with a course offered by AIARE at least every other year. For the non-AIARE CE years, Instructors can choose a CE course offered by AIARE or from a growing list of approved professional development opportunities. Instructors keep their instructor or course leader status active by paying annual dues and completing an AIARE Continuing Education course OR submitting proof of approved non-AIARE continuing education by October 31 of each year. After this date, Instructors who have not completed any of these requirements become inactive (not permitted to teach) until they do.

Inactive instructors must complete their professional development requirements for the previous season in order to become active again. If a course is completed after October 31 to reactivate an Instructor's status, this course will not count towards the Instructor's CE for the following season. In other words, the Instructor must take an additional course in that season to fulfill the requirement for professional development at the start of the next season.

Instructors pay dues, submit continuing education credits, and sign the [AIARE Code of Conduct](#) in October of each year. Instructors who do not pay dues, or submit proof of continuing education by October 31 become inactive (not able to teach) until they do. Instructors who are inactive for one year or more will need to work with the Rec Program Director to define an appropriate professional development plan in order to become an active AIARE Instructor.